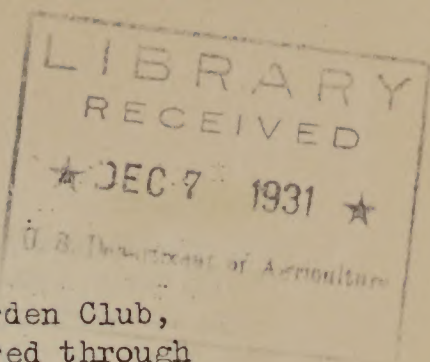


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MEETING - PROGRESSIVE GARDEN CLUB

A radio discussion by members of the Progressive Garden Club, W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, presiding, delivered through WRC and 45 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, Tuesday, November 24, 1931.

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ANNOUNCER:

Today, the members of the Progressive Garden Club are meeting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Brown on their farm two or three miles in the country. They have just telephoned that they are about ready to begin their meeting, so we will switch you to "Shadylawn" the home of Mr. and Mrs. Farmer Brown.

FARMER BROWN:

Hey! you fellers, give me a lift on this bag of potatoes. It must weigh nigh onto two hundred pounds. Where in the world did you get such a big bag, Walter?

WALTER MILLER:

Ha! Ha! Ha! That is a big one isn't it? I thought it would be just the thing to bring the potatoes in today.

FARMER BROWN:

Here, lean the bag against this barrel of apples. If the folks keep on bringing in stuff, we'll have enough to fill twenty Thanksgiving baskets instead of twelve.

MRS. BROWN:

Yes, and the kitchen table is piled full of flour, sugar, and canned goods, - - - looks like we had plenty to supply all the needy families in the county.

AUNT POLLY:

Well, I think we will need it all, for I already have eighteen families on my list. Most of them will have a very slim Thanksgiving dinner, unless some of us who are more fortunate share with them.

FARMER BROWN:

Jest see those hams and sides of bacon. - - - Makes you hungry to look at them. I think we'll have to cut some of the big ones in two so they'll go round. Now, I have a lot of bushel baskets on the back porch, and, after the meeting is over, we'll fill the baskets, and on their way home the members of the Club can deliver them to the families that Aunt Polly has on her list.

(over)

CHAIRMAN:

Now, I think we'd better call the meeting to order. - - Today, being only two days before Thanksgiving, we thought it would be a good idea to sort of look backward over the season that is just closing, and see what we have to be thankful for, and, perhaps we can see where we might do a little better another year.

AUNT POLLY:

Yes, no doubt we will think of a lot of things to be thankful for.

FARMER BROWN:

Yes-sir-ree! I've got a lot to be thankful for. My crops have been good, and, while prices haven't been high, I've done pretty well, and we have plenty of fruits, vegetables, and home-cured meat stored away for winter. Before you all leave today, I want you to see my big pumpkins, and my potatoes, and apples, and I'll tell you Mary's fruit cellar is worth seeing.

MRS. BROWN:

Stop your bragging John, the folks will think we invited them to our house just so we could show off.

CHAIRMAN:

That's all right now, and Mr. Brown may well be proud of this nice home, and your supply of good things to eat that you have stored away for the winter. I wish more people took pride in their homes and their surroundings like you and Mr. Brown do.

WALTER MILLER:

I've had my eye on Mr. Brown's garden all summer, and I think he had one of the best gardens in the county.

CHAIRMAN:

Yes, and I notice that he has his garden cleaned up, and plowed ready for next spring.

FARMER BROWN:

Well, I generally plow my garden in the fall, so as to let Jack Frost mellow the clods during the winter, then it saves time in the spring when I want to get my potatoes and other early crops planted.

CHAIRMAN:

Walter Miller, another of our good farmers of the lower end of the county, is with us today, and, by the way, he brought that big sack of potatoes for the needy families that Farmer Brown was talking about. Those certainly are fine potatoes, Walter, and I am going to ask you to tell us your "secret" of growing such nice potatoes.

WALTER MILLER:

Secret? - - I haven't any secret, at least, I don't call it that. Of course, I plant my potatoes on good land where I plowed under a cover crop. I plant certified seed, and plenty of it; I use a ton of fertilizer to the acre; I cultivate my potatoes shallow every week for the first five or six weeks, and spray them about five times to control diseases and insects. That's all there is to it.

FARMER BROWN:

All there is to it? -- Well, I calculate that's enough. How many potatoes do you grow on an acre, Walter?

WALTER MILLER:

Usually, about 350 bushels of marketable potatoes, but I have made over 400 bushels a couple of times.

FARMER BROWN:

Whew! -- 400 bushels -- Why, here I thought I was a pretty good farmer, but I consider if I get around 200 bushels on an acre, I'm doing pretty well.

CHAIRMAN:

You are doing pretty well, Mr. Brown, -- for the average yield of potatoes the country over is only about 113 bushels to the acre. Some years it is less than that. Here's something for you all to shoot at though, for the champion potato grower of the country -- Mr. L. G. Schutte of the San Luis Valley of Colorado, in 1929 grew 1145 bushels of Brown Beauties on an acre, -- and in 1930, Mr. George Pierce of Divide, Colorado, grew 1069 bushels of Triumphs on an acre.

FARMER BROWN:

That sounds like a whopper to me, but I guess I'll have to swallow it, seeing it was our Chairman that told it.

CHAIRMAN:

You don't have to take my word for it. Walter here, will tell you that I am right, besides those yields were checked by a committee, and the results were published in the papers.

WALTER MILLER:

I'll tell you though, record yields don't make a big average, and it's the increased average yield the country over that counts. Less acres, and more to the acre, that's what we should work for, that, and better quality.

CHAIRMAN:

Quality is what counts. Why, I've seen yields of potatoes and sweet potatoes so large that there was scarcely room for the potatoes on the ground after they were dug, but the quality of the potatoes was poor. It pays to grow the best varieties, plant good seed, and produce quality.

MRS. BROWN:

Yes, and I often think that soil has something to do with quality. It seems to me that the things grown in our garden have a better flavor than those grown in my sister's garden.

WALTER MILLER:

No doubt, many of our vegetables are more tender, and of better flavor when planted on good soil where they grow quickly. Have you ever noticed how much better a radish or a carrot is when grown on good soil?

(over)

CHAIRMAN:

Good soil, that's the key to the whole proposition, that and good seed, no matter if it is in the garden or the cornfield.

FARMER BROWN:

Do you know, I just like to see things grow, and I am thankful that I was brought up on a farm and have always lived on a farm. Some of the boys that I went to school with moved to the city, and they have done pretty well, got more money than I have, I guess, but I like our home here in the country with its fine shade trees, its lawn and shrubbery, and its garden and orchard.

AUNT POLLY:

Well, I agree with you, Mr. Brown, I guess I must have been just about raised in an apple orchard, and I would like to have you show me anything that is prettier than an orchard in full bloom, or loaded with beautiful red and yellow apples in the fall.

FARMER BROWN:

I don't know of anything that is more attractive than a nice apple orchard.

MRS. BROWN:

Nothing, unless it is an orange grove with the trees full of golden oranges and beautiful white, waxy blossoms at the same time. When I was at my cousin's in Florida last winter, I spent half of my time looking at the orange groves near her house, but I do love our orchard with its many varieties of fruits.

CHAIRMAN:

It depends a lot upon the way you were brought up and your home surroundings whether you are happy or not. If you were brought up among apple blossoms, you naturally have a hankering for apple blossoms in the springtime. If you were used to orange blossoms, you'll want your orange blossoms as the years go by.

FARMER BROWN:

Hello Betty! --- How did you get home from school so early?

BETTY BROWN:

I asked to be excused. I wanted to get home before the meeting of the club was over. And, Oh! Daddy, there is a little girl at our school that I want to tell you about. Yesterday, I noticed that she sat off in one corner while the other girls were eating their lunches, and she didn't eat any lunch. Today, I found that she did not bring any lunch to school, and I gave her one of my sandwiches, and, by and bye, she told me that her father has been out of work for three months, and that they have very little to eat at home.

FARMER BROWN:

Well, Betty, we'll have to see to that. We can't afford to have folks going hungry here in our neighborhood, especially around Thanksgiving.

BETTY BROWN:

Yes, and while you are fixing up the baskets for the needy families, I want you to fill one for this little girl's family, and Daddy, wouldn't it be fine to take the basket tonight after dark and set it in their porch, rap on the door, and then run away so they won't know who left it?

FARMER BROWN:

I think that is a good idea Betty, and we will let them guess who left it.

BETTY BROWN:

Won't that be fun?

CHAIRMAN:

Now folks before we get away today, I want you to observe the arrangement of the shrubbery plantings around Mr. and Mrs. Brown's home. You will note that the lawn is clear and open, and that the shrubbery is planted in clumps on the outer edges of the lawn, and around the house foundation.

FARMER BROWN:

I want you all to look out of this window. Do you see that big elm tree with the hole in it? Well, several years ago, a storm split a branch from the tree, and the place started to decay. What can I do to save the tree?

WALTER MILLER:

Why, clean out the hole and fill it with cement.

CHAIRMAN:

Yes, that's what is called tree surgery. First, you clean out the cavity and chisel away every particle of decayed wood, then paint the wound with some disinfectant such as creosote or tar. After this is done, you can fill the cavity with a rich mixture of sand and cement.

FARMER BROWN:

That sounds more like tree dentistry than tree surgery to me.

CHAIRMAN:

Well, I suppose it is a little of both, or you might call it dental surgery. Anyway, many fine old trees are being saved that way.

MRS. BROWN:

The flowers of my outdoor chrysanthemums were quite small this year. I would like to know if large chrysanthemums like those you see in the florists windows can be grown outdoors?

CHAIRMAN:

Yes, Mrs. Brown, very fine chrysanthemum flowers can be grown outdoors in parts of the country where frost holds off until late fall. You protect the plants through the winter by covering them, or you can keep them in the home, or in a coldframe. Early in the spring you "slip" them and root the cuttings in sand, then you grow the plants outdoors all summer. They want plenty of water, good soil and full sunshine most of the time.

(over)

MRS. BROWN:

Do you remove any of the flower buds?

CHAIRMAN:

Yes, toward fall, you begin to train them to single stems or double stems, or you head them back to make them branch if you want specimen plants with a number of flowers rather than one or two large flowers to each plant. After the buds begin to form you remove the side buds, leaving only the top or end bud on each branch.

AUNT POLLY:

I've just been sitting here admiring Mrs. Brown's beautiful begonias and ferns. I don't think I ever saw nicer house plants.

MRS. BROWN:

My plants are doing pretty well now since I have them in that sunny, south window. Before we remodeled the house, I did have a lot of trouble keeping my plants looking well in winter.

FARMER BROWN:

Well, I calculate if it takes sunshine to grow good crops in the garden and fields, that you want sunshine to grow good house plants. I always thought that Mary had a sort of magic touch for everything she plants grows just fine.

AUNT POLLY:

I'll tell you, it's the care Mrs. Brown gives her plants that makes them grow so nicely.

WALTER MILLER:

I want to know what this funny plant is growing here in the box, Mrs. Brown? It looks to me like parsley.

MRS. BROWN:

That is just what it is. You see, late in the fall, I lift two or three parsley plants from the garden, and transplant them to a box of soil in the house, then we have parsley to garnish our Thanksgiving and Christmas turkeys. We have a couple of sage plants in the garden, and I always dry a small quantity of the sage leaves, so as to have them for flavoring the turkey dressing.

FARMER BROWN:

We find that it pays to grow all of those little odds and ends for convenience if for nothing else. It doesn't take much extra trouble, and then you are sure to have them when you want them. Maybe, Mary and I are just a little old-fashioned, but we sort of enjoy being independent.

CHAIRMAN:

No, I don't think either you or Mrs. Brown could be accused of being old-fashioned, but times are changing. Why, we now have fresh fruits and vegetables on our markets right through the winter.

WALTER MILLER:

I'll say there has been a change in the last ten or twenty years, in fact, we can now have all of the comforts and modern conveniences in our farm homes.

FARMER BROWN:

Mary, where is Betty?

MRS. BROWN:

She is in the kitchen, here she comes.

BETTY BROWN:

Aren't you folks about through with the meeting? - - - Come on out in the dining room and have a bite to eat - - - just some doughnuts and cider.

FARMER BROWN:

Yes, and we've got to get those baskets ready to send to the needy families. Aunt Polly, have you the list ready?

AUNT POLLY:

Yes, here it is, - - - eighteen families.

BETTY BROWN:

And don't forget to fill a basket for the little girl I told you about.

FARMER BROWN:

Well, come on, let's see about the doughnuts and cider first.

- - - - -

ANNOUNCER:

And so we leave the Browns and their guests, - - - the members of the Progressive Garden Club, - - - to their refreshments, and afterward to the filling of the Thanksgiving baskets for the needy families of their community.

Those taking part in the program today were, Mr. W. R. Beattie as Chairman, Mr. Frank L. Teuton as Farmer Brown, Miss Norma L. Hughes as Mrs. Brown, Miss Patricia Beattie as Betty Brown, Miss Rose Glaspey as Aunt Polly, and Mr. Walter M. Peacock as Walter Miller. The meetings of the Progressive Garden Club are brought to you as a part of the National Farm and Home Hour on the final Tuesday of each month. You may become a member of the Club and receive bulletins by sending your name and full address to the Progressive Garden Club, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., or in care of the station to which you are listening.
